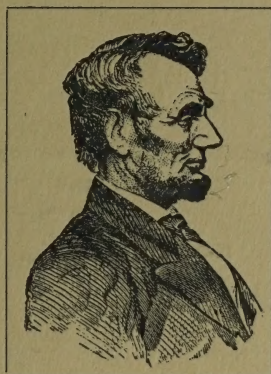


# ONE YEAR

## A RETROSPECT

---



AN EDITORIAL REVIEW OF THE  
FIRST TWELVE MONTHS OF  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
**ABRAHAM LINCOLN**  
AS PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES

THIS EDITION IS LIMITED TO 100 COPIES,  
OF WHICH THIS IS

NO. 37

# One Year - A Retrospect

---

## Review of the First Twelve Months of the Administration of President Abraham Lincoln

---

Reprint of an Editorial in the San Francisco (Cal.)  
Herald and Mirror, March 4, 1862

---

(COMPILED AND EDITED BY ALLEN H. WRIGHT,  
SAN DIEGO, CAL., 1925)



# ONE YEAR - A RETROSPECT

---

This day exactly one year ago, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, took the customary oath of office, and was inaugurated President of the United States. The event was accompanied by many misgivings. The horizon of the future was dark with the clouds of coming civil war. The enemies of the new Administration had boldly predicted that the President elect would never be permitted to assume the office to which he had been chosen, or that if he did the star of the Nation's hope would go down in blood to rise no more. Not merely this, but partizan presses and orators in the interest of the misguided minority of the South flung aside all disguise, and, like men possessed by evil spirits, so rash and impracticable was the counsel they gave, frantically urged the people whom they professed to represent to tear asunder, by force, the bonds of amity under which they had grown to opulence and power, seize the capital, and carry an invading army with brand and bullet into the very heart of the long-enduring, oft-insulted North. These were no idle words; the men who uttered them were terribly in earnest, and moreover capable of putting their threats, to a certain extent, into execution. The leaders in the insurrection were, until recently, incumbents of some of the highest offices in the gift of the people. Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, John B. Floyd, of Virginia, Howell Cobb, of Georgia, and numerous others, who had either formed part of the Cabinet under James Buchanan, or filled positions of weight and responsibility under his Government—such were the men who had undertaken, at the most momentous crisis in our nation's history, to guide the ponderous car of revolution. They had absolutely all the available means of the Government in their hands, and they used it, with all the ability that in them rested, to effect that Government's destruction. When Mr. Lincoln succeeded to the Presidential chair, he found, to meet his purposes, an empty treasury, a diminished and disorganized army, officered principally by persons in the interest of the rebels, a navy too small and too widely scattered to be of any use in checking the rebellion, and a public service in which were so many traitors that it was next to an impossibility to distinguish friends from foes. This, then, was the task confided to the new Chief Magistrate, to be performed during

the first twelve months of his official career: to replenish an empty treasury which would thenceforward require millions to answer the demands upon it where thousands had previously sufficed; to create a new army and navy; to eradicate a rebellion which had been some thirty years or more in growing to perfection; in fact, entirely to reconstruct the nation. It was a responsibility from which the most resolute and capable might have shrunk appalled, and one which one actuated purely by motives of personal ambition could never have undertaken. Nothing but love of country, regardless of all motives less noble and disinterested, could have actuated Mr. Lincoln, in the face of a future so lowering, of difficulties so apparently insurmountable, and of menaces of personal violence even, in accepting the high position which another of more intimate official experience than he had found himself incapable of filling.

Mr. Lincoln began to cope with these difficulties at the very outset. On his journey to Washington he was obliged to make a detour to avoid the city of Baltimore, where an extensive organization had been discovered, sworn to take his life the moment he should present himself to the citizens. The calamity was averted only by the presence of some hundreds of special policemen, who had been sent on from New York and distributed throughout the President's line of march—charged with the especial duty of preserving his life. The inauguration was happily passed, and the trials of the Administration began.

The fall of Sumter was followed by the withdrawal from the Union in rapid succession of nearly all the Southern States. The appeal to arms became general throughout that section. The politicians had possessed themselves of the army there and all its appliances, and the people were powerless. They had nothing to do but to join in the hue and cry. The President, fully aware of the perils that environed him, at once proceeded to the discharge of his functions. On the 15th day of April, finding that all possibility of conciliation was passed, he issued his memorable proclamation,—calling for seventy-five thousand men to maintain the laws of the United States, and convening an extra session of Congress to meet the emergency. The rebels were also admonished to lay down their arms and to submit quietly to the laws, allowing them twenty days' time to return to their allegiance. The attack upon a Massachusetts regiment while passing through the streets of Baltimore fanned the fires of excitement into a blaze, and sectionalism, for the time being, enjoyed full sway. The North, at first slow to enter upon the struggle, was fully aroused. Energetic measures were indispen-



sable, and a portion of the Navy Yard near Gosport was blown up and burned by the United States officers and troops to preserve them from falling into the hands of the Secessionist. Then followed the demand for fresh levies, the order for the blockade, at first confined to the ports of Virginia and South Carolina, but shortly to be extended to the whole Southern coast, the formal declaration of war against the United States by the Congress of the Confederate States, the seizure of forts and government works by the rebels throughout the South, the discontinuance of the mail service in the infected districts, and the getting together of that enormous patriot army whose glorious deeds the press are still engaged in chronicling and celebrating, and the means for whose subsistence the country was so ready to bestow. No American ruler was ever before called upon to perform a task so enormous. And how well Mr. Lincoln has performed the task that devolved upon him, let the history of the last twelve months, which we have only briefly alluded to, answer.

Not the least of the difficulties with which Mr. Lincoln has had to contend has been the danger of a foreign war, which he has thus far admirably managed to avoid. He is by far the most efficient of all our recent Presidents; and if the promise of the present shall be but half fulfilled in the future, his name will descend to posterity as one of the most competent and unselfish rulers of ancient or modern times.

---

NOTE: *Charles A. Sumner was, at the date of the above reprinted editorial, the editor of the Herald and Mirror. The Herald was started in 1856 and survived for some six years.*  
—A. H. W.



